RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 28th April, 1988/Vaisakha, 1910 (*Saka*)

The House met at eleven of the clock. **Mr. Chairman** in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

IPKF Personnel in Sri Lanka

*61. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of IPKF personnel in Sri Lanka as on April 15, 1988;

(b) what is the daily expenditure incurred on the above personnel; and

(c) how long the IPKF is likely to remain in Shri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The strength of the IPKF in Sri Lanka as on April 15, 1988, was approximately 50,000.

(b) The daily expenditure, direct and indirect, consists of a large number of item and can not be assessed with any degree of accuracy.

(c) The IPKF is in Sri Lanka at the request of the Sri Lankan Government on the specific mission to implement the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement and ensure the security and safety of all communities in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka. The duration of the IPKF's stay in Sri Lanka should be seen in this perspective.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Sir, it is very surprising that this Government is not able to assess the expenditure which it is incurring on the IPKF operations. I do not know how blindly this Government works without even any accountability. At least they could have given a rough estimate of the expenditure. At least he can give it now. Secondly, the reports say that the number of IPKF personnel in Sri Lanka is more than 75,000. You have said it is 50,000. Why this discrepancy? Then, part (c) of my supplementary is that Mr. Prabhakaran and the LTTE have repeatedly offered to negotiate and asked for a cease-fire. Why is this offer not being taken adavantage of and the hostilities are not being terminated?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI **K. C. PANT**) : Sir, first of all, the difficulty in computing the expenditure is twofold. One, the number of troops has varied over the months. In the beginning about 10,000 troops were there. Now, there are 50,000. Secondly, the intensity of the operations is different. In the beginning there were no operations. It is only after two months of their going there that the operations started. Thirdly, there is the question of what you take into account. They get their pay and salary here. A certain amount of ammunition is used up even here, and so on. So one would not like to commit oneself to any figure. But if you want a very broad and general assessment, I will attempt it. It is somewhere between Rs. 10 lakhs and Rs. 15 lakhs per day. But I would not be bound down to this figure because of the reasons which I just mentioned. This is just an order of expenditure.

Now, about the question of the number of troops, the exact number is not 50,000. It is perhaps 52,000 or something like that. The exact number as on 15-4-88 was 50,332. These are the accurate figures.

The third question is with regard to the offer of Shri Prabhakaran. As my hon. friend knows, the Prime himself has said that if two conditions are met—first the LTTE surrenders arms and secondly the LTTE supports the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord—then certainly they are welcome to enter into the political process. In fact, that would be a healthy development. We have not closed the doors. I am sure the House will agree that these two are very reasonable conditions.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: I have the highest regard and respect for our Army and they are performing a very difficult task there. But at the same time there are reports that during the operations there are a large number of civilian casualties and also destruction of property on a large scale. I don't say that it is deliberate. It may be the result of the operations. But I would like to know the facts. I read from a West German newspaper, Die Wochenzeitung, dated 15th January, 1988.

"Since the Indian Peace Corps (IPKF) invaded"—of course, they have used the wrong word—"Sri Lanka's north on the 10th October, 1987, approximately 5000 Tamils have lost their lives in the artillery and tank fights of the dirty war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam **(LTTE).**

Since October 1987, about half a million Tamils have died and taken refuge either overseas or with relatives in less dagerous districts of the country. Around 20 per cent of all the buildings in Jaffna Town, a place where 200,000 people dewelt once, have been totally destroyed. In the suburbs the percentage may rise up to 80 per cent".

I would like to know what exact the real position is and what instructions have been issued to the IPKF to avoid civilian casualties and destruction of civilian properties. I had received some photographs from some sources of the casualties of the civilians there and sent them on to the Prime Minister. I did not send them as a complaint| sent them just for his information. He gave me a farbed reply that "instead of sending them to me, you sent them to the LTTE". I did not do it as a complaint. I just requested him to make a note of these things. I do not call them atrocities. They were happenings. I would request the hon. Minister to tell us what instructions have been issued to the IPKF to avoid civilian casualties and destruction of civilian property.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, I would like the House to know.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: The Prime Minister is simply laughing.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I am glad in a way that my hon. friend has raised this question because whenever the history of this campaign is written, one of the outstanding features will be the enormous restraint exercised by the IPKF when they entered Jaffna. The reason for that is **that the tactics adopted by the LTTE** included using human walls behind which they fired. Women and children were put in front. The IPKF accepted casualties rather than inflicting injuries on these innocent civilians. If you look at the **casualty figures, you will find that the** casualty figures are much higher in the beginning **when they were entering the city.** Now the casualty figures have gone down very much although they are entering the woods and cleaning up the camps and so on. But in the beginning where the civilian population was present, this is what happened and a great consideration was shown by the IPKF in relation to civilian lives and civilian property.

Sir, the question of the Prime Minister saying 'refer it to the LTTE' has to be seen in the light of the fact that when the troops entered Jaffna, at that time in many houses there were bunkers, not just ordinary bunkers but cement concrete bunkers, from which firing was taking place. Therefore, the LTTE, being in those bunkers, created a situation in which some firing had to be done at these bunkers. In **the process, whether one liked it or not, certain amount of damage was done.** But it could not be helped in the circumstances **of the situation. So, the responsi**bility there does rest with the LTTE. Today that is not happening because today the LTTE is not resorting to those tacitics. It is not in a position to resort to those activities. Our IPKF boys are certainly keeping far away from the civilians.

They are only attacking those which are militarily important places and those persons. So, I would pay a tribute to our Army and the IPKF boys for the restraint that they have shown.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, President Jayewardene has stated in his recent statement that the LTTE are one their last legs and he thanked the Prime Minister for bringing the ethnic issue which was burning there in Sri Lanka under control for the purpose of implementing the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement. On the other side, Sir, in the eastern province of Sri Lanka, we find a Muslim population of about 30,000, and it has been brought to our notice through he press also that Pakistan's hand is behind the clashes between the Hindus and the Muslims in that area.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is a separate question today on that. Therefore, you can club it.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: For implementing the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement, Sir, Pakistai's influence has to be removed from there, and also the Israeli intelligence agencies have to be removed. Therefore I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what steps the Government has taken to completely curb the influence of Pakistan and Israel in Sri Lanka for the purpose of implementing the Accord fully.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, there is another question, as rightly pointed out by Shri Subramanian Swamy. If you have allowed the question....

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: You can club it, Sir. You can allow. It is the Parliamentary procedure.

SHRI K. C. PANT: It does not exactly arise, but it is up to the Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is it?

SHRI K. C. PANT: There is a separate question on the issue which was raised by hon. Member. If you will allow it, I will answer.....

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: That is separate, Sir. This is about the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the House agrees, it can be clubbed... (*Interruptions*) Have you seen it?

SHRI K. C. PANT: I have seen it. If you like, I will answer it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Should I club the two together?

SHRI K. C. PANT: I have no objection, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the other Members agree....

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the House want it?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, the hon. Member has to approach you in the Chamber and request you and then you can alolow and not in this way.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): It is a totally different question, Sir. Procedurally, it is wrong, Sir. Nobody approached you earlier in the Chamber.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I know. That is why I said, if the Minister and the Members agree.... (*Interruptions*) **Let it go if** the House is not in the mood. I will go with the House. Now, Mr. Subramanian Swamy.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: **Sir, this is clubbing Qn. 74.**

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Calm down. Otherwise the blood pressure will go up every time I stand up. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Mr. Chirman, Sir, what is the reply to the question I have asked in pursuance of the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I agree with the Minister that your supplementary does not arise out of this question. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Sir, it is not a fixation about Chandraswami. I will give him the introduction if he wants. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I told you all this yesterday. You put your supplementary.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: You are saying I should pay no attention to this.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Sir, this is waste of time of the House. You wanted no interruptions in the Question Hour. He should not waste the time of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why don't you allow him to put the question?

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Sir, as a person who has taken interest for long in this Sri Lanka Tamil problem, I will have to admit that with the presence of the IPKF the genocide of Tamils which was taking place at the hands of the Sri Lankan army has been put to an end. Therefore, there is a gain certinly by the presence of the IPKF. But the question is that today the sword arms and the shield arm of the Tamils to protect themselves against the genocide that may be launched by the Sri Lankan army has gone because of the IPKF operations. So, the question is that with all this money that has been spent what is the guarantee that if you were asked to pull out tomorrow, because you say that you are there on their request, the Tamils will be able to defend themselves against the repetition of what happened earlier?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, the whole spirit and structure of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement, signed by the Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka is directed at the unity of Sri Lanka and the ethnic amity, if you like; but if amity is too strong a word, co-existence. And the whole ideal is that the two countries will work together to see that the objectives of that accord are achieved. The IPKF is also one instrument for the achievenent of that objective. And it is in the implementation of the accord that the real guarantee of Tamil safety lies and when we talk of Tamil safety, we must understand that they should not end the sword arm but rather the whole attempt should be to see that we draw them into the political process, into the elections. Let them gain power, if they can win the support of the people. That is up to them. That is what we believe in. And that is the right way, rather than to have a private army and defend the Tamils. This would be the end objective and I think this can best be served through the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement. And so far as the agreement is concerned, as my friend knows, India is a guarantor of that agreement and I do not think at this stage we should look beyond this. We should see this and this would be the best way out. And I may only add that we have to think of the intrests of all Tamils and not just of the LTTE.

AN HON. MEMBER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, what about his supplementary?

MR. CHAIRMAN: His supplementary does not arse out of this question. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are sacrificing our jawans there in Sri Lanka and we are incurring huge expenditure when we do not have enough forces to seal our borders to stop the terrorists from coming into the country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Put the question on Sri Lanka.

SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER: Sir, I would like to know what is corresponding advantage to our country by continuing to keep our forces there.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Sir, as I said just now, the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement has been entered into with certain objectives. Now, two of the objectives I mentioned are, one is that the unity of Sri Lanka

should be preserved. The other is that the ligitimate aspirations of the Sri Lankan Tamils should be fulfilled. The third is that our long-term security interests should be safeguarded. These are the important end objectives that serve the national interest and I think that is more than enough justification for the presence of IPKF in Sri Lanka.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: I feel the IPKF should discharge its responsibility in Sri Lanka for which it was sent. But from the hon. Minister's statement it appears, when he said that when IPKF is taking action against the LTTE the LTTE are putting women and children in front and then they are engaging IPKF personnel. Not only that..

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: As you did in Vietnam.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN:...in each house also, they have constructed very difficult bunkers. From the statement it appears that the LTTE is still getting a large measure of support from the Tamil population despite several months of IPKF operation...

AN HON. MEMBER: It is a mass movement.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Despite the vast publicity to the Sri Lankan accord, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what the Government of India is doing to win over the Tamil population politically in favour of the Sri Lankan accord and in favour of the stand of the Government of India.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I referred to the bunkers and the human wall in the context of the earlier period of the compaign when the IPKF were going into Jaffna city, and I have made it clear that that is not the position now. I made it absolutely clear. Secondly, our whole approach to the Tamil population has been one of great sympathy. So far as the relief operations go, IPKF took it upon itself to see that relief measures were undertaken on a wide scale. Relief went from India; and the IPKF saw to it that relief coming from Sri Lanka was also distributed and today in Jaffna peninsula, the situation is near normal. For instance, electricity has been restored; water supply has been restored; hospitals have been restored, Medicines are available; food is available; schools, post-offices and banks are now fully functional; essential repairs to government buildings have been carried out; regular supplies of essential commodities are available to the citizens; railway line upto Chavakacheri has been restored, and generally speaking, the life is much more normal. People are going out of Jaffna and coming back to Jaffna in large numbers everyday and going about their normal business, which they were not able to do earlier. So, it is through restoration of normalcy amongst the population and through removal of any fear and also through countering disinformation that has been spread not only in that area but in Sri Lanka generally and also abroad, one of which was quoted by another hon. Member today. That kind of disinformation is spreading and naturally we hope to counter that also in whatever ways available to us, and that way we are trying to see that Tamil population understands fully well that our objective is to safeguard their interest also in a multi-ethnic society in which we are not opposed to any, and we would like everyone to live in peace and mutual harmony.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: It is unfortunate that the hon. Minister justifies the atrocities of IPKF. I strongly condemn the attitude of the IPKF in Sri Lanka against Tamils...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Put your question.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: Our Government is very serious in disarming the LTTE. At the same time, Government of Sri Lanka so far has not come forward to declare merger of two provinces and implementation of devolution of power. In the absence of these two, under what propriety, under what moral right, does the Government compel the LTTE to accept the accord, on gun point?

SHRI K. C. PANT: My hon. friend, Shri Aruna, is a knowledgable man on this subject. He knows very well that when the IPKF went to Sri Lanka—I think, it was in the month of July or the beginning of August last year—for six months, there was a dialogue between the LTTE, the IPKF and the Sri Lankan Government. The attempt was to form an interim administration. In that phase, far from shooting, the whole attempt was to see that an interim administration was established in which the LTTE had a majority. The dialogue took a constructive turn. The Sri Lankan Government agreed. Speaking from memory, perhaps, seven out of eleven members were given to the LTTE in the interim administrative council, whatever it was called, council or committee. Then, over a small matter of changing one administrator, after changes in respect of two names were agreed to earlier, the talks broke down between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE. Thereafter, violence erupted and then the IPKF boys had to step in order to see that the Indo-Sri Lankan Government was salvaged. Therefore, it is totally wrong to give the impression that the IPKF went there with an animus against the LTTE. There is no question of any animus. Even today, we welcome the LTTE to come back to the political process. This is in spite of the fact that so many soldiers have died for which I expected at least a word of understanding from Shri Aruna. They have gone for a national purpose. He may disagree with us on the politics of this. But it is very strange that he does not have any sympathy for those who have lost their lives and limbs in the discharge of a duty placed upon them by the nation. When he makes a reference to this, he can condemn me. I am prepared to take that condemnation but he should not condemn the IPKF boys who are making a lot of sacrifices there. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: Be sympathetic to the Tamils. You are unkind. You are anti-Tamil. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Sir, are hon. Minister was saying that we should not condemn the IPKF boys. I salute them. I salute our armymen. But what is happening, Sir, reminds us of the happenings in vietnam. When the Vietnamese were being killed by the Americans, the whole American nation rose as one man to condemn... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Maran, please put your question. (*Interruptions*) You have no right to go out of the question (*Interruptions*).

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Sir, whenever wrong things are done, they are condemned. But here...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Come to your question.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: I am coming to the question. The hon. Minister was saying that our IPKF boys—I do not think they are boys—our IPKF heroes are working with utmost restraint, enormous restrain. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister.... (*Interruptions*). Here is a publication. This is not about the killing of the civilians, but concerning the civilians. On November 15, at 5 p.m. six unmarried girls and one married woman were subjected to rape. Shame. (*Interruptions*) This has been accepted by an IPKF officer. It seems they have been deported back to India. They have been deprived of their uniforms. Some action has been taken. Six unmarried girls and one married woman have been raped.

(*Interruptions*)

Sir, this has ben accepted by an IPKF officer, a senior officer of the IPKF stationed in Sri Lanka. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: What do you want to know?

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: I would like to know how many cases of rape have been reported so far. What action has been taken? Is this the way to behave? Shame on our armymen. My second question is...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your supplementary does not arise out of this.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: The figure given by the hon. Minister seems to be very ticklish. If the total number of troops is 50332, I would like to know how many are members of paramilitary forces, how many non-technical persons of there, how many peope in all are there in connection with this operation. This is very important because these papers have been publishing reports that more than one lakh people are there unofficially.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wants the break-up of combatants and non-combatants. If you have got the figure you can give it.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I would like to categorically state that there is absolutely no comparison between the situation in Vietnam and Sri Lanka.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why should you touch this point? I have disallowed this question.

SHRI K. C. PANT: If you have disallowed this, I will not make a reference to this, but I will say one thing. When he talks of the IPKF, the IPKF went there to Sri Lanka as messengers of peace, let me make it clear, and any attempt to malign them is most unfortunate and uncalled for.

I can also tell him that we are as sensitive about any simple incident that takes place in Sri Lanka. Those Tamils are as close to us as they are to you. Your do not hold a monopoly of the Tamil interest in Sri Lanka.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: Why not?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Therefore, I am telling you....(*Interruptions*). When we received some complaints on some women being searched by male IPKF armymen, we sent women police from India.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Later.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Naturally, not before that.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: How many cases of rape have been reported?

SHRI K. C. PANT: The point I want to make is, I did not need Mr. Maran to make me sensitive to the interest of the Tamil ladies in Sri Lanka. I am myself more sensitive than he is and so is this Government.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: I am asking about the number.

SHRI K. C. PANT: I have given the number of armymen. (*Interruptions*). The figure of 50332 which I gave earlier, is inclusive of paramilitary forces and so on.

SHRI MURASOLI MARN: How many rapes have been committed?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: I have raised my hand. I represent my party in Tamil Nadu. Others have been given the oppotunity, but not me. It is a very important question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have already spent 32 minutes on this quesion. Every question is important. Yes, Question No. 62.

रंगीन पोर्टेबल टेलीविजन का निर्माण

*62. **श्री सन्तोष बागड़ोदिया** : क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि

(क) क्या यह सच है कि भारत में अब तक रंगीन पोर्टेबल टेलीविजन सेटों का निर्माण शुरू नहीं हुआ है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं ; और

(ग) सरकार रंगीन पोर्टेबल टेलीविजन सेटों का निर्माण कब तक शुरू करने का विचार रखती है ?

रक्षा मंत्रालय में रक्षा उत्पादन और आपूर्ति विभाग में राज्य मंत्री (श्री शिवराज पाटिल) : (क) जी, हां ।

(ख) और (ग) यह निर्णय लिया गया है कि स्वदेश में विनिर्मित रंगीन पिक्चर ट्यूबों के आधार पर 36 सें. मी. आकार